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It is not more mournful than it if is true, that there are but few names in the catalogue of men of genius, which we can regard without a train of melancholy and sombre associations. Confining our reflections more or less to those, of whom

History seems uniformly to have left it doubtful, whether they were most blest or curst in the influence of the poetical temperament, we scarcely find a solitary exception to this remark. It is not that the misery with which the mass of mankind are endued, does not become the winding sheet of their memory and of their misfortune; while fame transmits with the works of great men, their tendency an inquietude, common to them with all their fellow mortals. For if the finer feelings of the child of genius were the common heritance of all men, all men would be poets and general sympathy would merge all the pity appropriated now by fortune to individual misfortune.

The multitude of mankind, more or less happy as they are enabled to indulge in the temperate enjoyment of the human appetites; and, in the end, equally blest with an average proportion of happiness, (which is the ideal child of comparison and dependent on the desires, capabilities and means of individuals, mutually acting on each other) go down into the grave, if not unwept, at least unhonored and unsung.

There are others again, whose aspirations are high and unlimited; but they are not of an intellectual order. Far different are the feelings and associations with which we linger by the grave of the Monarch and the Conqueror from those which rise upon the mind when she visits the tomb of Newton.

When royal curiosity descended into the vaults where successive generations of Princes slumbered in their kindred earth, and the heir apparent of the British throne entered the sepulchre of his predecessors, the bourne of their grandeur and the end of his own ambition, his feelings may perhaps be easily imagined; but they can scarcely be described. When the coffin of Charles the First was opened, when the head which nearly two centuries before, had been severed by the stroke of the executioner, again fell from the trunk, what a lesson was exhibited for the pride of kings! As if in mockery of royalty, the most unfortunate of an unhappy line, yet remained in the state in which he was deposited, when the low born regicides insulted his bleeding corse, and sanctified murderers this:

: umpled at his fall. Wherever the eternal spirit might have fled, the eye followed him not. But whatever had once presented to natural vision the object of reverence and obedience; whatever had once been sacred and separate; privileged from aggression and unapproachable but to the step of awe and veneration — was yet there — passive and insensible; whether touched by the hand of trembling royalty, or applied to the ear imagined by the poet —

To stop a hole to keep the wind away.—

But the monarch fell by the accidents of the political elements, and the disorganization of the human system. The causes which operated to overwhelm him were altogether external. He was weak; but his want of energy would not have subjected him to similar misfortunes at another era, and in a different crisis. He was weak; but as a simple individual, this would not have subjected him to persecution and death. And as a King, none but monarchs can fully sympathize in his fate.

The great become familiar to us by their fame. Unconnected with them by

interest or affection, yet while they move and are visible above us, their merits and demerits cannot but occasion a sensation in our hearts. If they become objects of our regard their death occasions perhaps more of the gloom, without any of the tenderness of the grief, first excited by the loss of a relative or a friend.

Few are probably so cold, as not to be moved by the premature death, and melancholy circumstances accompanying the end of the Princess Charlotte. It is not for us, in our brief comparison, to dwell on the impressions which the marked character of that unfortunate lady may have made on the mind. But becoming by her elevated situation, the object of general attention, — as a mother and a wife, all have been touched with her peculiar sufferings; as prescriptive heir to the crown, all can lament, that one who seemed so competent to adorn the diadem, should have no robe but the cerements of the sepulchre & no palace but the charnel house.

Far different, we repeat, are the associations and feelings, which start into being, as the mind reviews the life of departed genius. The works of her votaries are before us. At once their relics and their

sepulchres, the embodied image of their minds, and the triumphal mausoleum of their memory. to them we may apply a part of the literally insolvable enigma of Aelia Lalia Crispis—

Regarding through the medium of their relicts, those whose misfortunes in life were owing to the influence of the poetical temperament, we perceive the radical, insistent and internal source of their difficulties in the complexion of their minds. The collision of the world neither made or unmade them; it moulded the shape but could not affect the lustre of the diamond that shone within them. Born, not for the bustle of society, they were ill calculated to wind through the tortuous paths of speculation; becoming necessarily dependent in some measure, on those around them, the compromise between want and the loftier feelings of their nature retained them in a perpetual, heart sickening struggle. If the pride of genius rushes to the heart, and the fire of bitterest

scorn flash from the eye, when vulgarity and ignorance trespass on the sanctity of its superiority, by degrading comparisons or stupid sneers – what must be the power of that silent and constant spirit which knows the heart and borrows in the brain, when the weakness of the human nature is compelled to cringe before the superciliousness it despises – to receive the dole of consequential nothingness – to flatter the vanity of inflated ignorance, insensibility and weakness!

It is with intellectual error that we sympathize in the sufferings of deluded genius. Rare are the instances, where the favourite of the Muses is born to opulence or title. But whether rich or poor, highly or lowly born, they carry that within, which is an antidote, a perpetual barrier, to durable enjoyment. Still envy waits upon their steps; still all the meaner and the fouler passions are at work to prevent them in their hopes of living reputation; still apathy with half closed eyes and immoveable

features mocks them – and if the supremacy of talent bursts through every cloud and shakes away every weight; if fame shews their paths with garlands and decks their brow with imperishable trophies; if the burning treasures of the gleaming mine are glittering in lavish profusion beneath their feet; if beauty smiles for them and man adores them as demigods; – still the ideal miseries of their own engendering ripen into the darkest evils that flesh is heir to. Blest with the faculties of Midas, they are more miserable than Tantalus, for their hell is of their own creation.'

But for such as these, even charity grows cold – sympathy weakens, and affection withers. If the God that made them, gave them sorrow for their birthright, and inexplicable agonies for their inheritance, we cannot realize their situation, and our scepticism inflicts the most incurable wound in the bosom of the unhappy sufferer. For O! if there be a pang inconceivable than the

girdle of terror, keener than the fangs of torturing racks – "Luke's iron crown and Damien's bed of steel" – and fiercer than all imagination can conceive of the torments of the damned – it is to be wounded when we looked for compassion, repulsed where we expected fervent sympathy; insulted where we had a right to demand it.

But rare indeed are the instances, where ideal miseries alone are the portion of the child of genius. If from the constitution of their nature, we should expect to find them unable to buffet the billows of adversity, and steer their way among the crowds of avarice and cupidity, when we look at the rolls of biography, and learn their fate, we are not merely surprised at the multitude of examples which confirm the theory, but are astonished at the paucity of instances to the contrary. Every general rule, must, by the nature of our imperfect state, have its exceptions – and even this very maxim seems to have its exceptions, in the instance which we are contemplating.

Happy, too happy, would it have been for many a wretch, who lived for misery and died for posthumous admiration,

if he could but have realized this truth in season. When the evidences of premature ability first raised the glow of parental exultation; when imitation outstripped the wishes of pedagogues; how happy would it have been for him, if his guardian angel could have spoken with all the thunders of conviction — before vanity had ripened, and hope had turned the aspirations of the soul; before rivalship had changed into enmity, and emulation had sickened into envy; before a few brief years had formed a character, to last for time, perhaps eternity. Could that tutelar spirit have told him, that invariably and without exception,

"The mind's wretched sons are born
To cold neglect and penury & scorn,"

He might have lived like his fellows and died contented.

It is generally maintained that Providence has equally distributed the evil and the good in life. To impeach the credit of this doctrine were unwise, because it is a noble theory; hazardous for it would seem to arraign the justice of the supreme being, and to make

future punishment as work of super
erogation: and it would be unprofitable,
for happiness is comparative and in a great
measure ideal. It is a comfortable doctrine
to believe - it literally the rising from
disappointment; and if firmly trusted to,
prevents comparison and sows the seeds
of constant satisfaction and contentment.

We will not therefore attempt to
expose the futility of the creed, by weighing
ideal happiness and woe with substantial
pleasure and actual suffering. But we
may sigh, uncertainties for them, who in
their pilgrimage through life have been
the dupes of the former; who have
realized no pleasure scarce and heart sick-
ening on earth; but have been the goaded
victims of imagination; who have risen
in disgust from the table Providence
has spread, where the charities of life
afford their sweetest aliment - as the
tyrant did when his disordered brain
conjured up the ghost of Banquo, to blast
the merriment of the feast - who pine
in the dreary isolation of a heart, which
earth has nothing that can fill, and

heaven nothing that soothe. We sigh for them, and would fain believe, that every man is as happy, if he could realize it, as his fellow—

No more — where ignorance is bliss,
'Twere folly to be wise!